GROW YOUR CHURCH

NOVEMBER 1, 2017 BY **EVANGELISMCOACH**

6 COMMENTS

2 Church Website Pages to Help First Time Visitors

I consulted with the Church Hospitality Team leader of a large urban church that is developing a parking lot ministry greeter team.

Over the decades, this church has acquired neighboring parcels of land in the city to expand their campus. The end result being that there is no contiguous land parcel for one parking lot.

Instead, there are small disconnected parking lots scattered around the campus of multiple buildings.

The question we explored is how to help first time church visitors navigate the complexity of multiple parking lots when certain lots are full.

Together, we discovered two useful ideas for the Church Website: [Read more…]

Filed Under: Church Websites, Grow Your Church Tagged With:church, Church Websites, consultant, consulting, Evangelism,Hospitality, Pastors, visitors, Welcome Church Visitors

OCTOBER 24, 2016 BY **EVANGELISMCOACH**

4 COMMENTS

6 Conditions of a Growing Church

Our family is visiting a growing church.

Since our first time visit in June of 2016, we keep coming back. This gives me the opportunity to watch and look for transferrable reasons for its growth.

There is no single cause to the growth of this fellowship that started in a living room in 1984. But like fertile garden soil, nurtured by rain, this church has conditions that produce a harvest of new believers.

Though it has outgrown the living room where it started in 1984, but this church has not outgrown its mission to reach people for Christ.

I recently found a 30 year old article by Donald Gerig that describes intangible conditions for growing churches, and all 6 exist in the church we visit.

They describe the qualities, climate, atmosphere, or ambiance that is the very DNA of the local church.

[Read more…]

Filed Under: Grow Your Church Tagged With: Grow Your Church,small church

JANUARY 27, 2016 BY **EVANGELISMCOACH**

4 COMMENTS

Invite Your Friends to Church: 10 Ways to Pray

For Those Invitations

I happen to catch a listen on the radio this week of how author and apologist Lee Strobel became a Christian.

Part of his journey to faith was accepting an invitation to church.

At church, he heard Christianity explained to him with such clarity that it started his thorough investigation into the Christian faith.

I found myself thinking:

> How do unchurched people find their way into a church?

It usually starts because a friend invites them.
[Read more…]

Filed Under: Grow Your Church, Personal invitations, Prayer Tagged With: personal invitation, Personal invitations, prayer

NOVEMBER 13, 2015 BY **EVANGELISMCOACH**

2 COMMENTS

When to invite someone to church and not get rejected

Has this happened to you?

You invite a friend to church because you are excited about a new sermon series.

They are polite, but continue to dismiss your invitation with “Some day.”

The timing of your church invitation just doesn’t resonate with them.

How can you change that?

How can you increase the likelihood that your friend will say Yes and come to your church? [Read more…]

Filed Under: Grow Your Church, Personal invitations Tagged With:church invitation, church invitations, personal invitation, Personal invitations

APRIL 14, 2015 BY **EVANGELISMCOACH** 3 COMMENTS

How Google will bury your church website

On April 21st, a new update from Google will bury your church website from MOBILE search listings if your website isn't ready for their new requirements.

It won't matter if you've had your domain since the beginning of the Internet age and had a church teenager put a basic website together with iFrames.

If your church website is not up to Google's new mobile-friendly requirements, they will bury it when a user is looking for a church via a mobile device.

Your potential church visitors will not find your website (nor see these 2 important web pages).

Your potential new members will not locate your church under Churches in your town.

But you can fix your church website so that visitors can find your church from their mobile devices and computers.

Is Your Church Website Mobile Friendly?

This is the criteria that will affect your church website rankings:

> Is your church website friendly to mobile devices?

Can a person use your church website without having to zoom in to tap a link, read the text, or accomplish other simple tasks?

My friend Paul Steinbrueck , using the term Mobilegeddon, writes

> Google will start factoring mobile-friendliness into its search ranking algorithm on April 21. Google itself has called the update "significant," bigger than the Panda or Penguin updates.
>
> Websites that are not mobile friendly will be penalized.

Google will not drop your church website from it's search engine.

You won't see your website deleted from their searches.

But it will be booted further and further down in the rankings.

Being mobile friendly is one of over 200 signals that Google will use to determine where your website will appear in it's listing.

Google decides what mobile friendly looks like. If Google's automated bots think your website is not mobile friendly, your website will be penalized.

In the past, mobile friendliness was a minor criteria.

Now, it is a "significant one."

Can my church website be fixed?

Paul goes on to write:

> If you have not started working to make your website mobile-friendly by now, it's unlikely you will get it done by April 21.
>
> But all hope is not lost. Unlike other penalties that took weeks to resolve and remove, Google says the mobile-friendly factor is updated in real-time.
>
> That means as soon as your website is mobile-friendly your mobile search rankings will improve.
>
> You may not get it done before April 21, but the sooner you start, the sooner you will recover.

Even in recent weeks, I've seen church websites that are not mobile friendly.

The church I visited on Easter Sunday in 2015 is horribly useless and looks like something designed in the early 1990s with frames and awful colors.

Depending on the complexity of your website, the fix may take some time.

Option 1: Talk with an Church Website Expert

If you are HTML dependent for every page, you'll need to work at making the coding changes necessary to make your website mobile friendly. That is beyond what I can write here. In fact, Paul gives you an invitation to talk with someone on his team:

> If your website still is not mobile-friendly, don't freak out. But don't curl up into a ball or put your head in the sand either. Move forward. Decide as soon as possible whether you're going to make your current website mobile-friendly or get a new website. Decide as soon as possible who is going do the work.
>
> If you're not sure about these decisions and would like to talk them through, schedule a free call with one of our experts.

Tell Paul's team I sent you.

I've known Paul for several years from OurChurch.Com. You can find him on

- Twitter, @Paulsteinbrueck
- OurChurch.Com web design, hosting, & marketing services:http://OurChurch.Com

I've done a webinar with Paul, plus an interview on Church Websites (though recorded in 2009, it still has some good conversation starters)

Option 2: If you use a CMS, change your Church Website theme.

If you use a CMS like WordPress or Joomla on a self-hosted domain, you can search for a mobile friendly theme.

I personally use professional themes for WordPress from the Genesis Framework by StudioPress. All of their themes are mobile friendly. I have personally found that using WordPress to manage the content on my site to be the way to go.

A theme change (or new setup) for your mobile friendly website is not that hard.

You can change a theme in less than 2 minutes after you find the one you want.

Most of the work will be involved in making sure that all your content and sidebars reappear in the new themes.

I have had to change a few WordPress themes on some of my other website to make them mobile friendly. It took me a few hours to make sure everything transferred into the new theme that I bought from Genesis.

Option 3: Use a Church Website service that does it

all for you.

Here is one solution to turn your clumsy embarrassing church website into a awesome front porch for your visitors to come and see you before coming to see you.

Sure, you could do it free in WordPress or Joomla, but has anyone fixed your church website site in 10 years?

Clover Website is one solution to a church website that works.

I subscribe to a email list of church administrators and this one has been highly recommended in that list. You can read those recommendations here.

> We just switched to Clover Church Websites Sites last month. Our Youth Pastor maintains it and loves it. They even have a live person that answers the phone if there are any questions!
>
> Definite limitations due to the fact that they've designed it for easy use by non-web designers but the benefits, in my opinion, far outweigh the limitations. We haven't been backed into a corner by any of the limitations. Most have an easy work around.

Your church website should not embarrass you.

Look into Clover for your church website. This is an affiliate link which will benefit our ministry work in Latin America.

Read here if you need to convince your leaders about getting a church website.

Note: Links to Ourchurch.com, Studiopress, and Clover.com are affiliate links. Any purchases made through those links will benefit our ministry in Latin America.

Filed Under: Church Websites Tagged With: church marketing,church webpage, church website, Church Websites, social media

MARCH 17, 2014 BY **EVANGELISMCOACH**

LEAVE A COMMENT

Is your church website an open door or barrier to your church?

Today, Yvon Prehn allow me to share her guest post about your church website.

Yvon is an excellent writer and shares frequently on church communications – in fact, that is her ministry.

I've benefited much from my conversations with her and her regular newsletter provides all sorts of great snippets. She also runs a membership site that is extremely affordable for churches and ministries.

Guest Post: Is Your Church Website an Open Door or Barrier?

Today, if we have a question about anything, where do we look up information?

If we want hours of operation, products offered, staff bios?

If we want to know what movie is playing, what time a concert starts, what classes are offered at a college where do we do to find out?

Obviously, we go to the website.

It's the same whether we are looking up information about what computer to buy or what church to attend.

We judge the organization, its people, and its products based on the website.

If the website gives us winter hours and it is spring; if the sale has been over for weeks or if the hours of operation are incorrect, we aren't likely to visit the business or have confidence in it.

If the business is a franchise and the website is an obvious template, with little local personalization, we won't think much about the technical skills (equated with competence overall) of the staff.

Again, we judge a church the same way.

Unfortunately many church websites don't meet the minimal standards.

Though lost customers may be bad for a business, the consequences for a church are much more serious. Following is an example of what can happen and then some suggestions for change.

Read more:

Excellent Church Website Tips

The article goes on to give excellent tips to keeping up your church website.

- Keep it current.
- Learn how to create one in wordpress

In my experience, I still see a lot of churches that make dumb mistakes on their website – stuff that should easily be fixed:

- Doesn't say where the church is located (no address, not even a country)
- I visited another church website and couldn't find the time of their Christmas Eve services.
- Church website without service times or address.
- Simple questions that every church website should answer.

Help your church visitors find you this coming Easter

Easter is right around the corner.

Does your church website reflect your Easter services?

Does it promote the post Easter sermon series to help your visitors decide to return?

This Easter, some people might want to visit your church.

This Holy Week, some out of town guests may want to visit your special services for holy week.

You don't know who they are.

They don't know where they want to go.

God has given these first time church visitors spiritual thirst that propels them to seek a church.

So what do they do?